**YESHIVAT HAR ETZION**

**ISRAEL KOSCHITZKY VIRTUAL BEIT MIDRASH (VBM)**

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**THE LAWS OF THE BERAKHOT**

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**Shiur #49: *Berakha Acharona***

**The Definition of Solids and Liquids**

**Combining Foods for the *Berakha Acharona***

**Introduction**

(This is the final *shiur* on the topic of *berakha acharona*. I combined all of the *shiurim* into one file: Berakha Acharona combined. We will continue our study of the laws of *berakhot* next week.)

In the previous *shiurim*, we discussed the laws of the *berakha acharona*. We learned that one only says a *berakha acharona* (*Al Ha-Michya*, *Borei Nefashot*) after eating a *ke-zayit* of food. We dedicated *shiurim* to the study of the size and measurement of a *ke-zayit*.

Last week, we learned that one only recites a *berakha acharona* after eating a *ke-zayit* of food in a *shiur* of time known as *kedei akhilat peras* – the amount of time is takes to eat half of a loaf of bread. We discussed the size of this loaf (three [Rambam] or four [Rashi] *ke-beitizim*), and summarized the opinions of the *Acharonim* regarding the length of this time.

Regarding drinking, we noted that the *Rishonim* debate whether a *berakha acharona* is recited after eating a *ke-zayit* or a *revi’it* of liquid. Tosafot (*Berakhot* 39a and *Yoma* 79a) suggest that the *shi’ur* may be the same as for food, a *ke-zayit*, while the Rambam (*Hilkhot Berakhot* 1:2) rules that one only says a *Borei Nefashot* after drinking a *revi’it*, which is the amount of liquid displaced by one and a half eggs. The Rosh (*Berakhot* 6:24), and subsequently the Shulchan Arukh (210:1), cites both views and rules that one should preferably drink less than a *ke-zayit* or more than a *revi’it* in order to avoid a situation of doubt. It is customary to say a *berakha acharona* only after drinking a *revi’it* of liquid (commonly accepted to be approximately 86 cc, the volume of an egg and a half).

In addition, the *Rishonim* discuss whether the amount of time during which one must drink a *revi’it* of liquid in order to become obligated to say a *berakha acharona* is the same as the time period for food (Ra’avad, *Hilkhot Terumot*, 10:3) or shorter, “*kedei sheti’at revi’it*,” the amount it time in which one ordinarily drinks a *revi’it* of liquid (Rambam, *Hilkhot Shevitat He-Asor* 2:4; *Hilkhot Ma’akhalot Asurot* 14:9; *Hilkhot Terumot* ibid.). The Shulchan Arukh (212:10) rules in accordance with the Rambam, while the Vilna Gaon rules in accordance with the Ra’avad. The Magen Avraham (210:1) assumes that this debate applies to a *berakha acharona* as well. We discussed at length the definition of this *shi’ur* and whether and how it applies to alcohol and hot drinks.

This week, we will conclude our study of the laws of the *berakha acharona*.

**Definition of Liquids**

Last week, we discussed the differences between liquids and solids regarding the laws of the *berakha acharona*. There are some foods whose status is in doubt, and it is therefore unclear whether they should be treated as solids or liquids with regard to a *berakha acharona*.

For example, should we view ice-cream as a solid, in which case one says a *berakha acharona* after eating a *ke-zayit* within the time of *kedei akhilat peras*? Or is it a liquid? In that case, it would be unlikely that one would be obligated to recite a *berakha achrona*, as it is uncommon toeat a *revi’it* of ice-cream within the time it generally takes to drink a *revi’it*. In addition, as we learned previously, the blessing *Borei Peri Ha-Gefen* (when one drinks wine as well) exempts other beverages. Must one say a blessing before eating ice-cream after saying *Kiddush* (and drinking wine) on Shabbat morning?

The Shulchan Arukh (208:6) rules that a “*daysa*” (soft, grain-based cereal) that is fluid enough to be drunk is viewed as a liquid; if it is thick enough to be chewed, it is treated as a solid. Similarly, the Shulchan Arukh Ha-Rav (*Seder Birkat Ha-Nehenin* 8:8) writes: “Food which has melted to the extent that it is fit for drinking is not longer considered to be food. So too a liquid which solidifies and can be eaten is no longer considered to be a liquid.” (See also *Ve-Zot Ha-Berakha*, pg. 44 and pg. 100).

Based on this distinction, ice-cream, jelly, pudding, and soft cheeses (cottage cheese) would certainly be viewed as solids. More viscous dairy products would be viewed as liquids. R. Ovadia Yosef (Yabi’a Omer OC 8:25) disagrees and maintains that these foods should be viewed as liquids, regarding the laws of *berakhot*.

***Tziruf* – A *Berakha Acharona* after Eating Different Foods**

Different foods upon which the same *berakha rishona* is recited combine to the *shi’ur* of a *ke-zayit*. Therefore, if one eats half of a *ke-zayit* of an apple, and another half of a *ke-zayit* of an orange, one says *Borei Nefashot* afterwards. Similarly, if one eats half a *ke-zayit* of a fruit of the seven species and another half of a *ke-zayit* of another fruit of vegetable, one says *Borei Nefashot* (Mishna Berura 210:1). Liquids and solids do not combine to reach a *shi’ur*.

We learned in previous *shiurim* that when eating two foods, one says the blessing over the *ikkar* (the more important, primary food), which exempts the *tafel* (the secondary food). Similarly, a *berakha acharona* is said only over the primary food, assuming that one ate a *ke-zayit* (Shulchan Arukh 210:1; see Mishna Berura 210:1 as well).

The *Acharonim* discuss how to view a cake, the majority of the ingredients of which are usually egg, oil, and sugar, and not flour. Must one say a *berakha acharona* after eating a *ke-zayit* of cake or after eating a *ke-zayit* of flour?

The Magen Avraham (208:15; see also Derisha 208:1) maintains that one who eats a *ke-zayit* of cake or cookies, even if he does not eat a *ke-zayit* of flour, says the blessing of *Al Ha-Michya*. This seems to be the opinion of most *Rishonim* (see, for example, Rif, *Berakhot* 37b; Rambam, *Hilkhot* *Berakhot* 3:11-12; Rosh, *Berakhot* 6:7, et al.), who do not mention that one must eat a *ke-zayit* of flour. The Chayei Adam (50:21) records that this is the popular custom. The Mishna Berura 208:48) cites this as well, although he concludes that preferably one should only say a *berakha acharona* after estimating that he ate a *ke-zayit* of flour.

R. Moshe Feinstein (Iggerot Moshe, OC 1:71; see also Minchat Yitzchak 9:15 and Teshuvot Ve-Hanhagot 2:132) disagrees and expresses his amazement at the custom cited by the Mishna Berura. He insists that one should only say the *Al Ha-Michya* after eating an amount of cake which contains a *ke-zayit* of flour. Although, as mentioned, the custom seems to be in accordance with the first view, many suggest being stringent and eating a *ke-zayit* of flour. While hard, yeast cakes are generally mostly flour, in some softer cakes, flour may only be a ¼ or even less of the ingredients. As we mentioned previously, many maintain that a *ke-zayit* is indeed the size of an actual olive (i.e. 3-4 cc), in which case it would not be difficult to consume this quantity of flour, even according to the stricter opinion.

One must say a separate blessing on fruit, cheese, and other fillings, and they do not combine with the flour to equal a *ke-zayit*. Therefore, at times one may eat a very small piece of cake with a *ke-zayit* of filling and say only a *Borei Nefashot*.

***Borei Nefashot***

As discussed in previous *shiurim*, the blessing of *Borei Nefashot* is said after drinking (except wine) and eating rice, meat, fruits (not of the seven species), and vegetables.

Most *Acharonim* (see, for example, Shulchan Arukh 202:11 and Mishna Berura 202:55) maintain that unlike the *berakha rishona* of *She-Hakol*, *Borei Nefashot* is not a “general” blessing and cannot be said after eating foods which require a different blessing, such as *Birkat Ha-Mazon* or *Me’ein Shalosh* (*Al Ha-Michya, Peirot*,and *Gefen*). Some (see Kaf Ha-Chaim 202:79) maintain that *be-di’avad*, one who says *Borei Nefashot* after even a food that requires the *Berakha Me’ien Shalosh* fulfills his obligation. Furthermore, R. Moshe Feinstein (Iggerot Moshe, OC 1:74) suggests that if one does not have a *siddur* and does not know the *Berakha Me’ein Shalosh* by heart, he should say *Borei Nefashot* instead.

R. Ovadia Yosef (Yechaveh Da’at 2:22) disagrees and insists that *Borei Nefashot* is not a general blessing that exempts from other blessings, even in extenuating circumstances. Indeed, he takes this opportunity to implore us to know blessings by heart so that one does not find himself unable to say a blessing because he does not have a *siddur*.

***Al Ha-Michya* and *Al Ha-Gefen***

If one ate a *ke-zayit* of *mezonot* but is unsure whether he drank a *revi’it* of wine or if he ate a *ke-zayit* of fruit from the seven species, since he is already obligated to say *Al Ha-Michya*, he should mention wine (*Al Ha-Gefen*) or the fruits (*Al Ha-Peirot*) as well (Taz 208:19).

Furthermore, if one ate a *ke-zayit* of fruits from the seven species and a *ke-zayit* of other fruits, the blessing of “*Al Ha-Peirot*” suffices, as he mentions “fruits” in the blessing. If, however, he ate vegetables, he must say a *Borei Nefashot* as well (Shulchan Arukh 208:13). The Mishna Berura (208:64) notes that some *Acharonim* disagree and maintain that the blessing of *Al Ha-Peirot* covers the vegetables as well. Therefore, he suggests that one say the *Borei Nefashot* first, lest the blessing of *Al Ha-Peirot* cover both the fruit and the vegetables.

The Sha’arei Teshuva (208:9) cites *Acharonim* who maintain that although one should preferably say *Borei Nefashot* after eating rice, if one said *Al Ha-Michya*, or if one ate other cookies or crackers with the rice and said *Al Ha-Michya*, the rice is exempted. Some *Acharonim* (Kaf Ha-Chaim 208:41; Ben Ish Chai, *Pinchas* 18) maintain that even *le-khatchila*, one should say only one blessing. This is also the view of R. Ovadia Yosef (Yalkut Yosef 208:12). Others (see Shevet Ha-Levi 9:65) insist that the even the opinions cited by the Sha’arei Teshuva are somewhat novel, and surely *le-khatchila* one should say both blessings.

We noted previously that just as the blessing *Borei Peri Ha-Gefen* exempts other drinks, the blessing of *Al Ha-Gefen* exempts not only the wine, but other beverages as well (Shulchan Arukh 208:15).

**Waiting Before the *Berakha Acharona***

The *mishna* (*Berakhot* 51b) teaches that one may say the *berakha acharona* “until the food in his stomach has been digested.” The Talmud (ibid. 53b) explains that this is “as long as he is not hungry.” The Mishna Berura (184:20) records that some *Acharonim* estimate this to be about 72 minutes after one finishes eating. Seemingly, this should depend on the specific food and person. If one feels satiated even after 72 minutes have passed, one may still say the blessing. The *Acharonim* write that when in doubt, a person should eat another *ke-zayit* of food in order to be obligated to say the *berakha acharona*.

Next week, we will begin our study of *Birkat Ha-Mazon*. We will first learn the laws of *Mayim Acharonim* and *Zimun*, and we will then study the laws of *Birkat Ha-Mazon* itself.